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March, 1946

The Small House and the Architect

Art and the Machine

Wilson Eyre

Teamwork

Paints of Tomorrow

Traffic and Residential Real Estate

Proposed Additions to the White House Offices

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT THE OCTAGON, WASHINGTON, D. C.

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

MARCH, 1946

VOL. V, No. 3

Contents

| | | | |
|--|-----|--|-----|
| Teamwork | 115 | Planning for a University Campus | 153 |
| <i>By Markley Stevenson</i> | | <i>By Henry L. Kamphoefner</i> | |
| The Small House and the Architect (The Knoxville Proposal) | 120 | Honors | 155 |
| <i>By Harry B. Tour</i> | | | |
| Art and the Machine | 124 | Books & Bulletins | 156 |
| <i>By Morris Sanders</i> | | "New Cities for Old," reviewed | |
| Wilson Eyre | 129 | <i>By Frederick Bigger, F.A.I.A.</i> | |
| <i>By John F. Harbeson, F.A.I.A.</i> | | | |
| Traffic and Residential Real Estate | 134 | Architects Read and Write: A Pattern for The Institute | 159 |
| <i>By Reginald R. Isaacs and Victor H. Bringe</i> | | <i>By John W. Dawson</i> | |
| Housing Solved | 140 | The Institute's New Structure | 162 |
| <i>By William Roger Greeley, F. A. I. A.</i> | | <i>By Turpin C. Bannister</i> | |
| Paints of Tomorrow | 142 | Simplified Specifications | 163 |
| <i>By Harold R. Harlan</i> | | <i>By Horace W. Peaslee, F.A.I.A.</i> | |
| Three Architectural Fellowships | 144 | "Battleship Admiral" Morris | 164 |
| Architecture, Taste and Style | 145 | <i>By H. E. Jessen</i> | |
| <i>By Andrew Wilson Green</i> | | The Pittsburgh Chapter Adopts a City | 164 |
| Proposed Additions to the White House Offices | 151 | Opportunities for Service on The Institute Staff | 165 |
| | | <i>The Editor's Asides</i> | 166 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Wilson Eyre and two of his sketches | 131 |
| House for Walter B. Jeffords, near Glen Riddle, Pa. | 132 |
| <i>Wilson Eyre & McIlvaine, Architects</i> | |
| Entrance of the Coden House, New York | 149 |
| <i>Victor Proetz, Architect</i> | |
| Do you know this building? | 150 |

The *Journal of The American Institute of Architects*, official organ of The Institute, is published monthly at The Octagon, 1741 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Editor: Henry H. Saylor. Subscription in the United States, its possessions and Canada, \$3 a year in advance; elsewhere, \$4 a year. Single copies 35c. Copyright, 1946, by The American Institute of Architects. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1929, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C.

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153

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155

156

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159

162

163

164

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164

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Teamwork

By Markley Stevenson

PRESIDENT, AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

WHETHER or not you believe that "teamwork won the War", you will probably be willing to agree that, where and to the extent to which it prevailed, teamwork made the fighting of the War more effectual and produced victory sooner than would have been the case without it. Moreover, and without laying claim to any military knowledge, it seems apparent that the better the teamwork and the closer the collaboration between the fighting arms in any theater, the more effective were the blows delivered against the enemy. As a corollary to this collaboration, it is undoubtedly true that each fighting arm gained in understanding, appreciation and respect for the work of the others. The professions of architecture, engineering and landscape architecture could emulate this very inspiring example of collaboration and teamwork with resulting great benefit not only to themselves but also to their clients and to the general welfare.

For example, let us appraise the present situation as it relates to the practice of these three physical-planning professions. Is there teamwork? A little, but not nearly enough. The tendency is, unfortunately, for each profession to attempt to be a jack-of-all-trades, to stretch its limited knowledge and technique very thin, and to call on one or both the others for help only as a last resort. Too often, by the time the proper complement of technical advisers is reluctantly assembled, it is another case of "too little and too late" to be of much benefit to the client.

For the sake of argument, and because they have so much in common that it is probably true, let us assume that an architect, an engineer, or a landscape architect could, if given sufficient time, become reasonably proficient in either or both of the other fields in which he does not now profess competence. Admittedly, examples could be cited of individuals who have done so, but they are too rare to prove any-

thing. Why isn't it done more often? Apparently the answer is

—Time. By the time an individual had mastered all three fields of knowledge, together with their special techniques, he would probably be too old to practice anything except, perhaps, hobbling on crutches.

Over the millennia man has constantly striven to modify the natural environment in which he found himself, to the end that it might better serve his needs. As regards the individual man, this process still goes on, particularly in rural communities and among primitive peoples, where each man is his own lawyer, physician, engineer, architect and landscape architect. But under more complex social conditions it soon became apparent that better results could be secured by delegating certain portions of the building work to those who were naturally gifted and who, by education and special training, were additionally qualified to serve their fellow men in the field of building. This began the process of evolution which has resulted in the separate professions of engineering, architecture and landscape architecture. To say which preceded the other, the engineer or the architect, is as unanswerable as the old

question as to which came first, the chicken or the egg.

At first, even in these specialized fields, there was little differentiation between an architect, an engineer, and a landscape architect, either among themselves or in the public mind. All were builders. Often in the same individual were to be found all the then-developed knowledge and skill required to perform all three functions. For centuries engineers practiced architecture and architects practiced engineering and both practiced landscape architecture, all without any particular consciousness of the fact that they were doing so, or that they might be trespassing on another's field. They were builders of whatever man required. Many of the builders of the Italian Renaissance were in this category. They could, with equal facility, design a bridge, a building, or a landscape. But, with the discovery over the years of so many new facts and the increase in importance of so many known facts that one man could not master them all, the segregation of the professions of architecture and engineering became more pronounced.

Nevertheless, the common origin of these two professions is clear from the fact that in many parts

of the world, even today, the term "engineer" is applied without distinction to both engineers and architects, and in other sections no doubt the reverse is true. That their collaboration is considered essential is well illustrated by the term "architect-engineer" which has been adopted in recent years by some governmental agencies. With no attempt to define specifically "who does what", the term "architect-engineer" clearly indicates the desire on the part of the agency concerned that these two professions shall assume joint responsibility for the solution of a problem.



If adopted generally, this procedure would mark a long step forward in teamwork. But to expect the ordinary citizen, to say nothing of governmental agencies, to understand exactly "who does what" when the landscape architect is added to the others is, at the present time, to expect a miracle. Yet the landscape architect has an important contribution to make to the general welfare.

The further process of evolution not only caused each of the two professions—architecture and engineering—to be separated into several well-recognized branches, but

it made the comparatively new profession of landscape architecture essential to the complete fulfillment of man's desire to arrange his physical environment in an orderly manner for use and enjoyment. But again, so many new facts were discovered and the importance of so many known facts became so increased that one man even in this newer profession could not master them all. Henry Vincent Hubbard, in his "Introduction to the Study of Landscape Design",* has described this development very clearly:

"With the handling of such a newly segregated field of fact there comes the acquisition of a new technique, the elaboration of theory in a new direction, even the growth of a new technical language, which also takes time to master.

"This is what has happened in the case of landscape architecture. Within comparatively recent years, there has come a general recognition of the value to the public of designed and organized cities, and of parks, reservations and other out-of-door spaces, and a greatly increased interest in private pleasure-grounds of various kinds. There is now an effective demand for designing skill using as materials ground forms and vegetation, and for designing skill in the arrangement of landscape and architectural forms—streets, parks, build-

* Macmillan.

ings—in larger unities, for public use.

"This demand has been met by the rise of a separate profession, because the materials and technique of this new field are not those of the older allied professions of architecture and engineering, and are quite as difficult to master within an ordinary lifetime. And in no field is it possible to design effectively 'on general principles' without a detailed personal knowledge of the materials and technique."

In the teaching of landscape architecture clear proof of its close relationship to engineering and architecture is found in the "Minimum Educational Requirements", adopted by the American Society of Landscape Architects, and accepted by the approved schools of landscape architecture throughout the country. These requirements provide that, in a standard four-year course leading to a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture, the student shall spend approximately fifty per cent as much of his time on engineering and architectural subjects as he does on landscape architectural subjects. About twenty-five per cent of his time is spent in the study of civil and other engineering theory and practice, including surveying, and about twenty-five per cent on such subjects as history of architecture, theory of

architectural design, and problems in architectural design.

The landscape architect recognizes the preoccupation of the engineer and the architect with the design of structures. He urges their recognition of his preoccupation with the design of the landscape: ground forms, vegetation and structures in their relation to the landscape. The landscape architect always strives to see the landscape as a whole. He is ever conscious of the continuity of the surface of the earth, of the infinite variety and interrelationship of ground, water and structural forms which comprise the landscape, and of the consequent possible far-reaching effect of his work. His thorough knowledge and sympathetic understanding of these factors, together with his special skill in the modification and manipulation of the elements of the landscape, perhaps more than anything else, inspire and guide his work. He is qualified to plan and design land not so much, perhaps, because of any special genius but as a result of long and specialized education and training in his field of building—landscape building.

Thus, with so much common background in education, training, and experience, and faced with a

public generally ignorant of the distinctly separate functions and limitations of architecture, engineering and landscape architecture, and with the prospect of a period of great building activity, we, the physical-planning professions, are challenged to adopt a policy of teamwork if those we serve are to receive their full money's worth. By stressing how much we have in common, rather than by attempting to accentuate wherein we differ, while at the same time reserving to each that part of the whole which each is best qualified to contribute, we can put teamwork into practice.

In the solution of a problem which will provide for the most practical as well as the most economical development from the standpoint of design, construction, operation, maintenance, and, by no means least, the pleasant appearance of the result, teamwork will require acknowledgment of the fact that it is essential that *all* the planning and design skills inherent in

all the physical-planning professions shall be coordinated and applied. Each profession has an important contribution to make to the success of the whole, and to the extent that any one is neglected or overlooked the work will fail in the complete fulfillment of its purpose.



Let us seek with humility to understand and respect the part which each profession has to play in the creation of our physical environment. Let us seek to minimize rather than magnify our differences. Let us emphasize the great area of common ground on which we stand, and for which we can with confidence claim the respect of the public for our services. Such teamwork would be reflected in an undreamed-of improvement in the quality and beauty of our physical environment in the years ahead. Let us make common cause for the common good.



"The services of the architectural profession, bonded with the banking industry, can diminish to near the vanishing point the disastrous and oftentimes horrible community planning and construction more commonly known as 'jerry-building'."—H. R. FLETCHER, Cashier, People's Bank of Cumberland, Md.



The Small House and the Architect

SOMEWHAT over three months ago the chapters were asked to report on small house plan services in their respective communities. With the exception of three chapters who approved of, or were participating in, the "Home Planning Service" developed by *Better Homes and Gardens*, and the Architects Home Plan Institute of Minneapolis, no substantial effort to furnish special service in the small house field was manifest. The results of the questionnaire were reviewed by The Board at its Chicago meeting in December. In The Board's opinion the state-

ment on "The Small House" published in the February, 1945 JOURNAL still expressed the current position of The Institute with respect to architectural service for the small house builder.

Meanwhile, a proposal has been made by the Tennessee Chapter in the form of a program submitted to its members for their approval, improvement or rejection. When, as and if the profession is convinced that it has in this field a responsibility that should be met, the Tennessee proposal might serve as a basis of discussion. Its text follows:

Proposal to Establish The Knoxville Home Planning Service

THE HOUSING SHORTAGE throughout the United States is critical, more so than at any time during the history of this country. It is estimated that there will be required at least 1,000,000 new homes each year for the next ten years, or an average of one house per year for every 140 persons. Knoxville's share will be 1,000 new houses annually. Who is go-

ing to furnish plans and specifications for all these houses?

Under the present building code, no one is allowed to build a \$5,000 house in Knoxville without first obtaining a building permit based on plans and specifications prepared by a local, registered architect. This is as it should be to safeguard the health and safety of the people and to provide for the

orderly and progressive growth of the city. But can the local architects satisfy the demand for 1,000 sets of house plans each year?

A review of existing conditions leads to the conclusion that it would be virtually impossible for the local architects to handle this volume of residential construction in the normal manner because:

1. Practically all offices are already working beyond their capacity on larger and more remunerative work and it is likely that this backlog of non-residential construction will continue for some time.

2. There is a nation-wide shortage of draftsmen, without much relief in sight until the members of the Class of 1950 receive their diplomas from the architectural colleges.

3. It is difficult, if not impossible, for any office to render "complete architectural services" for less than 10% of the cost of a \$5,000 home unless previously prepared plans are used and supervision is omitted.

4. It is doubtful if the average homebuilder will be willing to pay anything like 6% to 10% for a set of plans for a \$5,000 house when it is realized that this is about the equivalent of a \$3,500 pre-War residence.

If the local architects are unable to satisfy the growing demand for small house plans and no suitable alternative is provided, it is logical to expect that owners, speculative builders, contractors and lumber dealers will start furnishing their own plans in defiance of the code. It is, therefore, our responsibility to find a way to make good house plans easily available to prospective homebuilders at a reasonable cost. If we don't we may expect that:

1. A great many persons will elect to build outside the city limits, where the provisions of the code do not apply; or

2. There will be a popular tendency to ignore the code; or

3. An effort will be made to revise the code to do away with Section 201.

In order to find a practical solution for this problem, the following proposal is submitted for consideration:

It is proposed to establish in Knoxville a home planning service which will enable prospective home-builders to obtain stock plans and some architectural advice at a reasonable cost. . . . The organization will be known as "The Knoxville Home Planning Service," and membership will be open to all registered architects who are eligible

to practice architecture in the City of Knoxville.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Each member (firm or individual) may submit as many standard or stock house plans as he chooses. Plans shall be suitable for residences costing between \$5,000 and \$15,000 under current prices. A non-member jury will be selected to pass on the acceptability of designs and the completeness of drawings. All designs accepted by the jury will be available for resale. Any plan may be withdrawn at any time by the contributor.

OFFICE DIRECTOR

The office will be operated by a non-registered architect who is capable of discussing ideas with a client and helping the client select from among the stock plans available, a design which is suitable for his property, his family requirements and his pocketbook. In addition, he shall be able to advise a client on furniture and equipment, financing, construction and other matters which are usually a part of the normal architect-client relationship.

If the client should want a moderate number of changes in the stock plans or specifications, the

Director will be expected to make alterations which appear necessary or desirable. It is expected that he will be well enough qualified to make such alterations and revisions without too much coordination with the contributor of the original design. The cost of any alterations to plans and specifications will be paid for by the client on an hourly basis.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT

It is assumed that the cost or profit from this enterprise would be shared by all participating members on some fair and equitable basis. For the first few months it is likely that the cost of operation might exceed the income. After it is well established, however, it seems reasonable to assume that it would prove quite profitable. The following assumed rates and fees are, of course, subject to further discussion, but are presented here to show what might be expected:

Nominal charge for any unaltered design (3 sets of prints and specifications) would be 1% of the estimated cost of the house, with a minimum charge of \$50.

Revisions to plans or specifications would be charged to the client at the rate of \$5 per hour.

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ing of three inspections during construction would be furnished for an additional 1% of the estimated cost of the house, with a minimum charge of \$50.

EXPENSES (per month)

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| Office Director's salary..... | \$300 |
| Stenographer | 100 |
| Office rental..... | 200 |
| Blueprinting | 150 |
| Miscellaneous expense..... | 150 |
| | |
| Total | \$900 |

To cover this cost it would be necessary to sell 18 sets of plans of \$5,000 houses a month. For alterations, on which the client is charged \$5 an hour, one-half would go to the office Director (or stenographer) and the other half would be placed in the general fund. If the time required for inspection became too great for the office Director, the income from inspection fees would be adequate to hire a full-time inspector. No allowance for income from alterations or inspections is included in the above tabulation.

DIVIDENDS

At the end of the year, if the office incurred a net loss, the deficit would be borne equally by all participants. If, on the other hand, the operation resulted in a net

profit, a reasonable reserve would be retained for future contingencies, and the balance would be divided by direct ratio of the amount derived from the sale of plans.

Since the sale of 18 sets of plans per month would cover most of the fixed expenses, it seems obvious that this venture could be made to pay handsomely if the sale of plans should reach a figure of two per day or forty per month. Should the volume become too much for a skeleton office force, more draftsmen or stenographers could be added at a low unit cost.

ACTION

The present housing shortage is assuming national importance and it appears evident that Washington is about to adopt drastic measures to stimulate residential construction. If we, the architects of Knoxville, are going to measure up to our responsibility, we must do something *immediately*. If the foregoing proposal is sound and acceptable, steps should be taken at once to put it into effect. If it is not acceptable, now is the time for serious and constructive thinking in an effort to find a better plan.

HARRY B. TOUR,
President, Tennessee Chapter,
A.I.A.



Art and the Machine

*By Morris Sanders **

Excerpts from an address before the Yale School of Fine Arts, January 29, 1946.

ALTHOUGH a very great deal has been written on Art and the Machine, the subject remains extremely elusive and difficult of approach—at least for those of us who toil in the vineyard.

But the subject of the Machine defies easy definition; it appears to be as boundless as our expanding universe. When one speaks of machines, he refers to the instruments themselves, to their parts, and to their products. He stimulates visions of mechanical contrivances that cut, shape, sew, destroy, cook, carry, fly, drill, blast; that exemplify almost every active verb in the dictionary; that are motivated by almost all natural phenomena and all combustive materials, to which group atomic energy probably will be added shortly. I leave the boundless description of

machine elements and parts to the Yale Schools of Engineering, to turn briefly to machine products, to manufactured goods.

Here again, memory and imagination bog down. What isn't made or served by the machine today! X-ray equipment and juke boxes, currency and compacts, overshoes and computing mechanisms, things useful and things silly, objects helpful and harmful, big and little, simple and intricate—things handsome and things homely.

Finally at this remote point I begin to approach the subject of our meeting today. Just what is meant by beautiful and ugly in the vast, ramifying world of the Machine? And where does or *can* Art enter the scene?

Modern museums and advanced

* Mr. Sanders was born in Little Rock, Ark., studied at Phillips Andover, at Yale (Ph.B. and B.F.A.), and during three years abroad. A registered architect, much of his professional practice has included product design and development—a subject of which he has also written authoritatively. He is at present vice-president of the New York Chapter, A.I.A.

writers on esthetics have taken pleasure in reminding us of the extrinsic, the objective beauty of perfectly machined bearings, of gears or cams in rest or motion, of propellers, locknuts and dynamo housings. Modern photographers and painters admire the machine and its parts for their glitter, perfection of surface, chance form and line; they give the machine the center of the stage occasionally or they use it as background for their realistic, sur-realistic, or frankly commercial compositions at other times. We who are generally sensitive to form, line, rhythm, color, and the eternal wonder of man and the universe, respond almost automatically to clear expressions of geometry and mathematics. Forgotten memories, buried nostalgias, psychological associations, and the plain ordinary demonstration of organized and cooperative thinking on the part of our fellow humans, unite to give us a deep, if generally indescribable, pleasure when we contemplate the machine and its world. If normal, we react in much the same manner when we observe nature closely—note the spirals of the nebulae, shells, vines, and animal movements; the dentritic patterns of trees, blood vessels, and lightning flashes; or the

concentric designs of tree-trunks and bone-sections.

It seems to me that such natural and easy human responses to form and beauty are splendid, productive of personal pleasure, and deserving of cultivation. But it also seems to me that a more informed approach can be more satisfying, richer in emotional and intellectual return. It does seem that a large part of all that has been written about the subject of machine art is obvious, and that much of the rest has been presented in the clear, ringing cant of the esthetic fraternity, signifying very little to the serious student of art, to people such as yourselves.



I cannot promise to do better in a general consideration of this oversized subject. But fortunately, I need not confine myself to generalizations. I can approach the subject from your specialized position, that of the creative human who seriously plans to play an active part in a challenging world—a world of machines and art and people.

Among the many definitions of Art, we find this in the Oxford Dictionary: it is "The cultivation of skill in the arts of design." And

Oxford further defines Design as "adaptation of means to ends."

These definitions would appear to give us our best clue to a judgment of machine art: in general, our means are the machine and its adjuncts; our ends are human; the aim is human satisfaction of the highest degree—physical, esthetic, mental, moral.

If Oxford is correct, as I feel it is, the creation of good design transcends the mere selection of appropriate forms, esthetic or otherwise. It demands much more of the designer than good taste or even the great gift of original composition and adaptation. It demands understanding of two other very important things: 1) The machine and the material and operational factors that control it; and 2) People—their needs, their deserts, and their aspirations.

A well-designed product, whether it be a teacup or a dynamo, can only be created and can only be fully appreciated by men and women who have full understanding of purpose plus normal esthetic feeling. To force a teacup into the simplest of geometric solutions, say a pure hemisphere, might result in some obvious esthetic advantage, but would surely result in much more real esthetic loss; to shape the

cup according to chance manufacturing convenience and plain, unadorned utility, would prove equally disastrous.

A well-designed teacup—or any other product—strikes exactly the right balance between so-called "pure" esthetic and functional demands. It depends on the changing nature of the market, available materials and fabricating methods, of the merchandising pattern, of contemporary need and habit. It represents—like the finest of the Fine Arts—a compromise on the part of its creators. If it is good design, it represents the best conceivable compromise, an excellent balance of judgment. Good design is living truth, the solution to a mathematical equation—but one of calculus, based upon many variables and few constants.

Having begun by ragging the overly simple formalæ of the "Significant Form" school, I may seem to be raising the mystic banner of the "Form follows Function" school, despite my use of the unhappy word "compromise." Actually, there is reason in both approaches, but both seem inadequate.

Certainly, form should follow function; but just what is function? The sensitive and informed

designer—or user—of manufactured goods recognizes that the word is flexible, subject to changing analysis and interpretation. Considerations of appearance and personal touch must enter into the design of builders' hardware, home lighting fixtures and andirons to a greater degree than is the case with the railroad hardware, office fixtures and oil burners. And strict technological considerations alone should properly enter into the design of machine parts, factory lighting, and industrial furnaces.

Yet, I submit that any or all of these end products can reach the same high level of good design, can give their creators and their thoughtful users the same degree of esthetic satisfaction.



It is understood that some utilitarian products must be designed with *pleasure* as a function of importance. Domestic flatware, for example, should grace the table, should add to the pleasure of living, besides serving as a tool for eating; we make fewer such demands of kitchen or institutional silver. Yet equal knowledge, selective judgment and artistic ability are required in the design of all.

Or I might say *should* be required, for in the design of these and many other manufactured products, confusion of design purpose seems only to be matched by the manufacturer's desire to cater to human weakness. We do not criticise the manufacturer and his designer for merely deviating from stark simplicity as a goal; we realize that there is a place for everything, including applied decoration. But we do feel justified in criticising a vulgar conception, one that represents brainless imitation, that gives pleasure by gratifying empty snobbery or degrading love of display.

No matter how successful any product of the arts may be commercially, whether superficially handsome or cleverly contrived; no matter how well its form may fit its function; it can only transcend design and enter the realms of art when it contains something of the human soul and its aspirations. We can only consider it art when that note has been woven into the work by the skilled hand of a man.

As I've said before, there are many reasons why we automatically respond to the beauty of machine parts. The sight of perfectly machined bearings can be as

pleasing, as beautiful, as a glimpse of the moon on water; but in neither case is beauty the result of human striving for esthetic perfection. In both cases, the esthetic content is accidental. But without successful and generally intentional human effort, there can be no art.

The note of aspiration that differentiates art from good design eludes definition. It is a breath of human organisation and inspiration that is felt rather than seen. It may lie in a curve—or in the absence of curves; it may result from simplicity or the addition of an unnecessary touch. Whatever it may be physically, it elevates the spirit and gives the product intrinsic meaning.

When we recognize this note in the handicrafts, we feel a touch of exaltation. Many a Greek vase or early Renaissance example of wood-work has moved all of us beyond the power of its fellows. We *knew* that an especially gifted hand, one guided by an especially generous mind, has there been at work.

But because we are naturally less familiar with the vast world of the Machine, because the hand of the creator is too frequently lost in a miasma of technical collaboration, or blunted by faulty merchandising, we are more confused in

our judgments in these fields. We are frequently thrilled by the sight of a machine whose purpose is unknown to us and then disappointed to learn that it was a failure.

Since it is obvious that no human can undertake to comprehend all means and ends in the vast ramifying world of the Machine, it is clear that no one of us can hope to squeeze out of it all esthetic advantage. Yet the alternative offered thoughtful people is neither mere superficial pleasure in externals nor over-simplification of subjective purpose. The alternative offered you and me is much more satisfactory. We are invited to cultivate our awareness—awareness of the real world, its technical progress and its old and honored hopes for humanity.



And we can do much more than merely add to our personal capacities for enjoyment. We can cultivate our abilities. All of you plan careers in creative design. You may or may not feel that the Fine Arts, major and minor, are each distinct and separate. I hope that you feel as I do, that they all flow together in one great stream. Although I do agree that one can, if he chooses, lead a fairly active life

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within the confines of any one of the arts without slipping into the territories of another, I trust that you choose the more adventurous artistic career. For whether you intend to call yourselves painters, sculptors, or whatever, you want to live your creative lives fully; you might also determine to design useful products for people—and in terms of today's broad tool, the machine; you might well add product design to your career.

Whether the designer's activity results in handsomer playbills, toothbrushes, or caterpillar tractors, doesn't matter. There is deep satisfaction to be found in raising the standards of understanding and comfort of society. And although, unlike doctors, we artists and designers take no Hippocratic oath, we must consider ourselves duty-bound to render the existences of

our fellow men as agreeable as we can. Those of us who are both determined and gifted may even go further, may distill truth and reveal occasional traces of true beauty.

Above all, we owe it to ourselves to understand our own time, to live in it. As ours is a period that is completely dominated by the machine and its technical accomplishment, we must open our eyes and souls to this truth. Our Fine Arts seem to have reached their full maturity before the Industrial Revolution, at a time when one man spent a day hand-shaping one imperfect product. Now that we have arrived at a point where his grandson produces a thousand perfect ones a day, it behooves all of us to reflect this revolutionary change in our professional approach.

Wilson Eyre

1858-1944

By John F. Harbeson. F.A.I.A.

IN 1883, in the midst of a great deal of mediocre building, Wilson Eyre set up in practice in Philadelphia, at first as a partner of James P. Sims, and on his death shortly after, alone.

This city in the 'seventies had the characteristics of the Victorian Age. Its citizens were public-spirited, active in industrial expansion, full of big plans—for an international exposition, for the formation

of the world's largest city park, for the erection of a new City Hall (to be for a time the highest building in the world), and of numerous banks, churches and public institutions. There was intense activity; most of it was at the price of that good taste which is one of the attributes of culture. It was a manufacturer's paradise; its society rested on machine industry, and was delighted with the comforts of life produced by machines.

The architecture of this era was preoccupied with changes in construction, from wooden floor joists and flooring to fireproof materials, experimenting with iron beams supporting segmental brick vaulting. Its expression was generally crude, its ornamentation profuse, vulgar and unskillfully carved, its architectural forms massive and lacking good proportion. Even in building there was a change to a new industrial economy—machine replacing craftsmen.



It was in this atmosphere that Wilson Eyre began the practice of architecture. A man of exquisite taste, born in Florence, Italy, and spending his earliest years among its masterpieces, professionally trained at the Massachusetts Insti-

tute of Technology, he had an innate sensitiveness to beauty in form and texture, and for sculpture used as decoration of constructive forms. To him architecture was an art, a thing of beauty first. He was soon joined in this quest of beauty in building by Walter Cope, John Stewardson, and Frank Miles Day. This group raised the standard of architectural design from the low state to which it had fallen. To the taste and ability of these men, and of the younger men they trained, is due the fine quality of the domestic architecture that has since been built in Philadelphia's vicinity.

Wilson Eyre's practice extended to New Orleans, Detroit and New York City, to Connecticut and New Hampshire, but the environs of Philadelphia furnished the background for his most distinctive domestic work. His design was personal and individual, as was its preliminary presentation in charcoal drawings on rough paper, rendered in washes of water color.

He was particularly delighted with the long rambling country houses in England, because of their homelike qualities, and "because the garden formed as much a part of the house as the roof." He used the inspiration drawn from Eng-

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WILSON EYRE
AND TWO CHARACTERISTIC PRELIMINARY
SKETCHES FOR A HOUSE FOR
JAY COOKE, III
AT CHESTNUT HILLS, PENNA.





"HUNTING HILL FARMS" FOR WALTER B. JEFFORDS
NEAR GLEN RIDDE, PENNA.
WILSON EYRE AND McILVAINE, ARCHITECTS

lish and Italian work as a stimulus to his own invention—as a starting point for the evolution of the American house. He was absorbingly preoccupied with textures—textures achieved by everyday materials used in countless ways; varying the bonding and the mortar width in stone and brickwork, adze-dressing of timber, roughness in plaster surfaces. He was continuously interested in craftsmanship, and full of ingenuity in obtaining good work with the craftsmen at hand. "There is no use in giving a man modern tools and telling him to do bad job" (to get character); "give him primitive tools, and tell him to do the best job he can."

His most successful buildings are his country houses—long and low, the main part and the wings narrow; never a square compact house. In external composition it is the character of the roofs that gives the individuality. It was the roofs that tied the parts together, roofs generally gabled and with few dormers to break the

lines; roofs of lean-tos and porches and outbuildings leading the attention down to the terraces and gardens; the house and its surroundings forming a harmonious, picturesque composition. His houses always looked, in plan and elevation, as if they had grown—been added to through the years.

These buildings show everywhere his idealism, his innate gentility, and his unerring instinct in matters of taste; they started a renaissance in domestic architecture, here strongly affecting the development of modern work. His individuality had a pervading influence on the profession in Philadelphia.

A founder and president of the T-Square Club, president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the A.I.A., he was made a Fellow in 1893, was given the Medal of the Chapter in 1917, and was made Doctor of Fine Arts by the University of Pennsylvania in 1926. Living to survive his contemporaries by many years, he enjoyed to the last the beauty that is in music, literature and the arts.

Advertisement from a recent issue of the *Poughkeepsie New Yorker*: ARCHITECT WANTED—Must be tame, willing, intelligent, kind to children and animals, to remodel country house, design cabins, garage. Phone Clinton Corners 4177.

JOURNAL OF THE A. I. A.



Traffic and Residential Real Estate

By Reginald R. Isaacs and Victor H. Bringe
OF THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION, NATIONAL HOUSING AGENCY

Excerpts by permission from the *Federal Home Loan Bank Review* for June, 1945.

BEFORE 1880 the small American town was in many respects just what a community should be: quiet, livable, spacious, blended with the countryside; all of the streets, but one or two, were residential. The area of the town was limited; both social and business activities fell well within reasonable pedestrian or horse-and-buggy distances, which generally were not more than 2 or 2½ miles from the town's center.

This pleasant equilibrium, however, was soon upset. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, immigration accelerated the expansion of our population, and many new citizens sank their roots in our large cities.

At about the same time streetcar systems were introduced, contributing to the development of the large metropolitan area as we know it today. As cities grew, there was incentive to develop these municipal transportation systems, with the result that the area radius

of potential urban development mushroomed to 5 miles within the next few decades.

As the automobile became an economical means of popular transportation the radius grew to 15 or 20 miles. In a haphazard way cities hastened to adapt themselves to this new vehicle. Without realizing the implications of such steps, streets were hurriedly paved, later widened. In their efforts to attract trade through a hasty and ill-conceived adaptation to new transport media, many cities paved the way to their own undoing. The potential area of urbanization was expanding rapidly as the speed of transport increased, but changes were taking place slowly in legal boundaries which defined the area of the local tax authority. Often the flow of population to cities slackened or actually reversed itself as people sought to avoid the congestion, noise and dirt of the downtown area.

The flight to the suburbs repre-

MARCH, 1946

sented not only a loss of population but a loss of tax revenues. Yet it was not until the situation became acute that serious attention was paid to the deterioration of downtown realty. In the meantime the development of elaborate traffic systems placed these former residential neighborhoods in need of complete replanning.

Decentralization does not assure desirable environment; sometimes the traffic hazards are as bad or worse than in older abandoned areas. Residential and commercial development follow major roadways leading out from cities and concentrate at transit intersections where large numbers of people alight from and board transportation vehicles; scattered development in outlying suburban areas is encouraged by the provision of good fast routes from the center.

As a result of increased traffic, heterogeneous and unattractive commerce, sporadic housing and billboards sprang up along the length of the highway. For the 30-mile length of the Washington-Baltimore Boulevard outside of the two cities, there are over 600 commercial establishments and almost 700 houses having access to the highway, or an average of about one hazard per 125 feet. The pri-

vate investment in such housing has proven a loss, notwithstanding the potential commercial value of a few "choice" locations.

It has been estimated that traffic congestion in Manhattan costs \$500,000 per day. This waste is not confined to the largest cities. Through careful observation in Worcester, Mass., it has been estimated that congestion costs \$35,000 per day; in Cincinnati, \$100,000 per day. Few realize that an outmoded street system, due to inadequacy or complete absence of neighborhood planning, is the cause of a large part of the increasing rate of traffic accidents and deaths. Contrary to popular belief, accidents are not concentrated in the central business districts; Syracuse has reported 40 to 50% of such accidents in residential areas. The costs of accident prevention are paid for by taxation on real estate.

The haphazard use of all varieties of vehicles on all sorts of streets and roadways has resulted in unanticipated costs of maintenance. Few residential streets are built for trucking and heavy buses; consequently macadam, oiled, gravelled, brick and block roads have had to be replaced by heavy-duty reinforced concrete roads at high cost—resulting in heavier taxes, di-

rect and benefit assessments. Increased, but not planned-for, traffic results in demands for wider streets. Yonkers, N. Y., spent a tremendous sum to accomplish street widening, and found that the additional width was promptly used for parking.

The practice of storing cars along the curb makes many of the city's major streets inefficient. It is debatable whether the use of 25 to 30% of the total paved area for parking can be economically justified, although some allowance must be made for stops to discharge passengers and for emergency repairs.

Yet off-the-street parking must be both convenient and economical if it is to be enforced. In recent years there has been a trend toward making such facilities compulsory. For example, the Greenwich, Conn., ordinance requires multiple-family units to provide automobile storage capacity in the ratio of two spaces to every three family units, while in New Rochelle, N. Y., the ratio is one storage space to every two family units, with garages located within the building, beneath the side or rear yards, or courts, or in a separate structure.

The ordinances and regulations of many cities require far greater

street construction than necessary for normal travel. For instance, the conventional grid patterns predicate monotonous, uninteresting streets, dangerous intersections, short blocks and unnecessary side streets, resulting in high improvement costs.

The Federal Housing Administration has recognized the dangers of indiscriminate traffic in residential areas. "If a high-speed traffic artery passes directly through a desirable neighborhood area with similar development on each side of the artery, the noise and attendant danger constitute an adverse influence. . . . The same principles apply when rating locations on ribbon developments along highways. Such locations tend to attract uses which are often considered, from a residential standpoint, as nuisances." In *Rental Housing Standards* (1940), the F.H.A. recommends: "Minor residential streets shall be designed to discourage through traffic and create as few intersections as possible with the main thoroughfares. Streets leading to the site . . . should provide safe and convenient access at all times." Based upon these and other criteria, the agency appraises individual properties, giving penalty scores where proper traffic

and home relationships have been ignored.

The variety of problems caused by obsolete design of streets, transit lines, terminal and parking facilities almost paralyzes movement in many cities. The results are observable in the rapid depreciation of residential neighborhoods, as well as in the declining values of central business and industrial districts. What will the results be if the prophecy of the Automotive Safety Foundation for the post-War period is anywhere near correct? Its studies indicate a 30% increase in the number of vehicles and a 50% gain in mileage to be traveled. The Public Roads Administration in a study, "Toll Roads and Free Roads" (1939), anticipates that the total vehicle mileage will double by 1960. Unless means can be found to make faster and more convenient the movement of goods and persons in cities, we may anticipate further decline in property values and un-economic scattering of city dwellers over wide suburban areas.



What measures are available or planned to provide satisfactory circulation of traffic and conserve existing real-estate values? All

levels of government—Federal, state and local—are moving to meet this problem.

In 1944, President Roosevelt transmitted to Congress the report of the National Committee on Interregional Highways, which devoted considerable attention to the problems of urban areas. Shortly after, the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944 was passed. For the first time, substantial funds were authorized for roads in urban areas. Distribution of these funds was entrusted to the Public Roads Administration.

Among the provisions of the Act are: \$125,000,000 yearly will be granted by the Federal Government for urban roads for the first three years after the War. Roads in areas are to be planned on a metropolitan-wide basis by all the units of government concerned.

State highway departments will be responsible for these projects; state expenditures will at least match Federal grants and may surpass them. The municipality may be called upon by its state government to contribute toward the cost of projects. Under almost any conceivable post-War conditions, large sums will be spent for urban roads.

What measures have the municipalities taken to ease their traffic

problems? The New York City Planning Commission is required by its charter to include plans for all "transportation" in its master plan. The Transit Board and the Regional Association of Cleveland have proposed highway and transit plans, designed to be realized step by step, over a period of time. Chicago already enjoys the benefits of its first achievements in planning for both vehicular traffic and mass transit. The City Planning Commission of Minneapolis, in its survey of traffic on major streets, has made recommendations for the improvement of traffic facilities to channel through-traffic around residential areas, and for the accomplishment of the full program in easy stages. Many other cities are planning for traffic needs on a metropolitan-wide basis with the state and Federal officials concerned.

Local planning commissions are concerned with the stabilization of neighborhoods by protection from indiscriminate traffic. Proposals have generally included recommendations for a few major and secondary streets to channel the heavy traffic around residential areas, protected from noise and danger by well-landscaped buffer strips. Consideration is given to

street design in relation to volume and kind of traffic: a 60-ft. street right-of-way is sufficient to serve multiple-family and apartment developments, 50 feet is adequate in single-family areas, and as low as 40 feet in cul-de-sac arrangements. Along with narrower roads, lighter and more economical construction is suggested as adequate for anticipated (and planned-for) smaller traffic volume.



One objective of progressive traffic planning is that only those vehicles shall enter the community which actually have business there. There are many communities in which this principle has taken concrete form; the first was built in 1929 at Radburn. Here homes turn their back doors on the street, fronting instead on green parks and safe playgrounds inside the large residential areas. Through-traffic in residential sections is discouraged by the discontinuous pattern of local streets. Foot traffic has its own walkways, separated from moving cars by over- and underpasses. Similar examples of planning are to be found at Green Acres, L. I.; Greenbelt, Md.; Buckingham, Va.; and Cerritos Park and Baldwin Hills Village, Calif.; and in many

temporary and permanent War-built communities.

It is physically impossible to provide complete facilities for every individual motorist from home to work areas. Mass transit, by using street space more efficiently and economically, may provide the logical solution to this problem. However, in the past, transit policies sometimes contributed to over-concentration of population and thus to the unbalanced real-estate values resulting from this condition. The problem then is how to utilize urban transit as the most effective tool in furthering the desirable development of urban places in accordance with long-range comprehensive community plans.

What are some of the factors which must be considered if urban traffic needs are to be properly met; if residential values, commerce and trade, and industrial convenience are to be safeguarded in urban areas?

It is to be taken as an axiom that in planning for traffic, the urban locality's needs must be considered as a whole, and considera-

tion given to the views of those concerned with enhancing residential, business and industrial values.

The effects and limitations of particular projects must be understood before work is begun. For example, will an express highway project, undertaken before the transit system is improved, tend toward uneconomic scattering of city dwellers? Can the modern city provide central parking for all those who desire to drive to work in the central area?

When a balanced plan has been agreed upon by local authorities, the progressive steps to be taken should be decided upon so that each project assumes its place in the long-term development of the area.

Investments in real property of all kinds—homes, stores, apartment houses—are at the mercy of the traffic stream. Properly channeled and controlled, this stream will stabilize and enhance property values. Uncontrolled, it can undermine the value of individual homes and neighborhoods of a city. Broadly conceived plans and action are needed to conserve values and achieve supportable communities.

"The subject of unification and the subject of women are alike; everybody's in favor of it but nobody knows just how to handle it."—ROGER ALLEN.

Housing Solved

By William Roger Greeley, F.A.I.A.

THE ONLY WAY to meet an emergency is by emergency methods.

If the Pilgrim Fathers had been limited to an eight-hour day, this land of ours would still belong to the Indians.

Years of all-out production for war—which is to say “waste”—have left us impoverished. We lack food, clothing and shelter. With an alarming dearth of all these things, we stick to the methods and moderation which developed in times of plenty. We somehow expect by normal effort to produce abnormal amounts of goods and services, and to do this in jig time.

Extra goods result only from extra efforts. “I can’t never buttered any parsnips”. Extra efforts consume extra hours, and extra hours are what we Americans possess in unprecedented numbers. If we had a mind to use them we could have our food and housing and automobiles in abundance.

Here on the Atlantic Seaboard, for instance, is a community of two million people. Among other things it woefully lacks houses to live in.

One out of eight of its inhabitants is able-bodied enough to work $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours a day instead of the present average of $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours. In other words, 250,000 of its citizens can devote 750,000 hours a day by way of extra effort to make up for the waste of war and to meet the dire needs of the new day. 750,000 hours a day is 225,000,000 hours a year. Let us throw away 25,000,000 hours to provide for days off on account of sickness or of vacations or pleasant dissipation of one sort or another. That leaves 200,000,000 hours—extra hours! This is a veritable Niagara of power, unharnessed now, but capable of prodigious accomplishment if harnessed.

If we fail to rise to the occasion, the potential productivity of this leisure time in a single metropolitan community measures the amount of our impotence to meet the emergency.

Is it possible for citizens to organize the wasted hours of their day? Can they be led to realize the opportunity? Are there definite examples to point to—vivid, simple, convincing?

Yes.

Here is one: A Massachusetts village needed a playfield. It had a site, but the ground was rough and uneven, and the cost of grading figured out to be about \$15,000. The village was poor; \$15,000 was not to be had; but the people decided to dip into their reservoir of spare time. They met Saturday afternoons through the fall, bringing shovels, hoes, plows, horses, tractors; and, on the part of the ladies, doughnuts and coffee in practically unlimited amounts! The result was twofold. First, a playfield was created at no cost, thereby saving \$15,000. Second, a morale had been created among the citizens which gave them a sense of comradeship never experienced before, and a feeling of power and independence in facing future problems. If the first result was valuable, the second was invaluable.

Here is another: Four friends decided to build four houses in a New Hampshire village, so that they could live there in a little colony. They sought the advice of an architect, bought materials, occasionally employed a little help, but themselves built the houses in the spare time of a single spring,

summer, summer vacation and fall. They were none of them skilled artisans, except as nowadays a man has become so used to repairing and painting his own house that he is far from a novice in the art of construction.

A third and final illustration: A Scottish boy who had come to this country and become a printer, bought some land and a small house, married and raised a family of twelve children. As the children began to leave home he organized his spare time, evenings and week-ends, around a fascinating project. He determined to build, single-handed, a Scottish castle, reminiscent of one familiar to his boyhood. Now, at the end of twelve years, the castle is complete, and the builder has experienced the extraordinary satisfactions of well-harnessed leisure devoted to the realization of a great ambition.

Twelve years of spare time equal one castle; equal, in terms of labor and material, six small houses.

Now, to translate the work of one pair of hands for twelve years into terms of 250,000 pairs for one year, we come out with 125,000 small houses as the achievement of

well-directed, out-of-hours employment in one large community. On the 200,000,000-hour basis this would mean the leisure time of four men for eight months for each little house.

Because of habits of carelessly spent leisure and of looking to others to make and sell us everything, we are throwing away 125,000 small houses per year—potential houses—and losing 200,000,000 hours of creative, stimulating, rewarding activity.

In National terms this is 7,500,000 small houses per year.

Dispute the reasonableness of these figures. Divide them by two if you prefer. Divide them by four. Divide them by anything you please, and you still will have a Niagara of human power dashing itself aimlessly into the abyss, a Niagara of which the potential is staggering, which harnessed would pull us together and build for us not only homes but self-respect with which to furnish them.

Paints of Tomorrow

By *Harold R. Harlan **

Reprinted from the *Chapter Bulletin*, Northern California Chapter, A.I.A. for October, 1945.

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS in the protective and decorative coating industry, under the pressure of the recent crisis in our national life, will ultimately result in new types of finishes; all intriguing to the architect. The shifting availability of raw materials and the multitude of surfaces to which the finished coatings were applied has

required basic studies of physical and chemical principles not previously explored.

More complete technical information on old and new raw materials has resulted in more thorough knowledge of formulative and manufacturing principles. Practical application of this vast quantity of technical data promises improve-

* Mr. Harlan is technical director of Harlan Associates, Paint Research Laboratories, and the author of several articles in Dr. Joseph Matiello's monumental work, "Protective and Decorative Coatings" (John Wiley & Sons, 1941-45), and numerous other scientific papers on paint and paint technology. His work in specifying and testing materials for the San Francisco Housing Authority was of great aid in the painting of war housing projects.

MARCH, 1946

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ment in such qualities of pigment-vehicle systems as adhesion, color, hiding, ease of application and durability, and permits the manufacture of highly specialized finished products.

High-vacuum separation of drying oils to segregate fractions of different drying qualities permits regrouping of the constituents; subsequent chemical treatments offer almost unlimited characteristics in the resultant oils. Color, color retention, speed of drying, consistency and flexibility may be specified and a new oil synthesized to meet the specification.

The introduction of titanium pigments broadened our concepts of the whiteness and covering in exterior paints; the successful manufacture of more complex crystal structures of the rutile type of titanium dioxide has contributed to the control of the chalking of these pigments in exterior paints. Judicious incorporation of these pigments, in combination with white lead or leaded zinc, have proven of exceptional durability and have permitted the elimination of one coat from the conventional three-coat painting systems.

The objectionable fading of pastel shades, due to chalking of a tinted white, may now be elimi-

nated through the use of special titanium pigments, tinted to the approximate shade during the pigment manufacturing process.

Protection of the Armed Services from insect-carried diseases and the defense of supplies from contamination by rodents, fungus and insects required an enormous research program; the results achieved have provided specific substances with proven specific repellancies, all of which may be incorporated into coatings which may be applied by dipping, spraying or painting. We may expect that new houses can easily be rendered permanently repellent to vermin, fungus and insects, although all the preliminary work is not yet complete. Through the introduction of new testing methods and the refinement of old, physical testing of coatings has now advanced to the point where the life-expectancy of a given coating can be predicted with reasonable accuracy. Accelerated weathering, the salt-spray test, abrasion tests and the examination of clear vehicles or coatings by ultra-violet light are the most important tools, although others are sometimes required.

Improvements and refinements in the manufacture and processing of such basic paint and varnish in-

gredients as alkyds and phenolic resins, and the enlightened use of these materials with improved oils and solvents, may provide a minor revolution in the concepts of painting through the elimination of the customary "wet paint" sign. Paints and enamels of improved durability and weather resistance may be expected shortly. These coatings will have co-incident "wet edge" and "dust free" times, of the order of sixty to ninety minutes; this means that the paints may be applied by brushing, will have a working time of at least one hour and will dry to the touch within two hours and be hard enough to handle within four hours. Such paints have been con-

sidered in the past; however, the durability usually left much to be desired and the finishes were frequently deficient in other ways.

Such improvements in coatings suggest a close approach to the ideal coating; a stable one-coat finish, that is practically indestructible. That this is not as fantastic as it sounds but is in the realm of possibility is suggested by the fact that the Eastman Kodak Company have patented dyestuffs coupled with phenolic resins, which produce a molecule that is resinous, permanently colored and which, when properly applied, would be almost indestructible.

Three Architectural Fellowships

NOT LATER THAN March 25, 1946, applications must be in the hands of the Secretary, School of Architecture, Princeton University, Princeton, N. Y., for the Lowell M. Palmer Fellowship —on forms available from the same address.

All applicants must hold a Bachelor's degree, must be citizens of the United States of America, less than 27 years of age on October 1, 1946, and in good physical condition.

In awarding the Fellowship particular consideration will be given to achievement in architectural design; scholastic record; personal character and experience.

The Palmer Fellow is exempt from tuition fees, and will receive a stipend of \$700 during his year of residence at Princeton. He will be entitled to all the privileges of a Fellow of the University, including residence in the Graduate College buildings, where he will be expected to live.

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The fifteenth annual consideration of candidates for the Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellowship will close May 1, 1946. Yielding \$1000 toward the expenses of a year's study of the Fine Arts here or abroad, the Fellowship is open to graduate students. Further details and application blanks may be had from Dean Rexford Newcomb, Architecture Building, University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.

The John Stewardson Memorial Scholarship, applications for which must be in the hands of the committee not later than April 1, 1946, yields \$1000 for the study of architecture here or abroad. Conditions of eligibility and further details with registration blanks may be had from Morton Keast, Secretary, 1108 Commonwealth Building, 1201 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Architecture, Taste and Style

*By Andrew Wilson Green**

LIEUTENANT, U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES, WEATHER SERVICE

THE present confusion in architectural criticism is caused in part by a misunderstanding of the nature of taste. The reaction of the modernist is to deny that only a traditional vocabulary of forms, such as the Classic, can produce works of artistic value. However, this beneficent modern reaction against the limitations of historical styles for present-day use is frequently accompanied by a serious critical error. This error is the failure to believe in the existence—

or at least the significance—of taste.

The dominance of the Beaux-Arts style and its subordinate eclectics for the last half century is well known to all students and to all observers of the American environment. The designers of the Beaux-Arts schools planned well, and with the aid of engineers, built well. Their fundamental error was to believe that our age could, and even should, be made to look like the Classic world; but the

* Lieut. Green, son of M. Edwin Green (Laurie & Green) of Harrisburg, Pa., studied architecture at Princeton before the Army Air Forces sent him to N. Y. University and made a meteorologist out of him. While forecasting for the Air Forces his thoughts returned to architecture.

truth was and is, our age is an industrial world requiring a different rationalization than the antique world.

The modernist has attempted to correct the errors of the Beaux-Arts influence by asserting the primacy of the organic or functional principle of design. A doctrinaire pursuit of the functional theory has led to his neglect of taste in architecture. This is an error of great import, for the modernists are becoming, and will become, the future arbiters of architectural standards.

The organic or functional theory of architecture states that the design of a building ought to grow out of its nature. By nature is meant the material elements of which a building is made, its use, site, materials, and construction. A rational organization of these elements according to the principles of efficiency and economy is *right* and this rightness is the source of beauty and satisfaction. Beauty to him is thus a derivative quality from functionally designed building. The modernist tends to deny that *appearance* is a necessary element to beauty, and even says that such beauty as comes from the arbitrary treatment of appearance is a false beauty which should be re-

jected by architectural critics as sham. The modernists thus have a moral position as well; to doctor appearance is malpractice.

The insufficiency of the modernist's esthetics is shown by a simple demonstration. A building problem admits of alternate solutions equally satisfactory on the standards of economy and efficiency. If this is denied, and the modernist chooses to maintain the uniqueness of the best solution, the modernist must demonstrate this to be so in every building problem that has arisen or may arise. For this demonstration needs only *one* building problem concerning which informed critics are in doubt or controversy as to the excellence of alternate solutions on these two standards. And since human controversy is evidence of real controversy (the proper judgment of human things is human judgment), the demonstration is thus shown as one possible to make.

If two solutions have been found equal in economy and efficiency, the demonstration of another standard of judgment requires only that *one* person express a preference for either one. (Let that one person be an expert, too.) That this can be done is evident. And that it properly demonstrates a third

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standard of architectural design is equally true; for esthetic is an empirical as well as moral study, describing what people *do* prefer as well as what people *ought* to prefer. Yet this third standard is not rarely found. Ask yourself whether *you* would not make a choice in such a circumstance, and particularly so, if you were asked to make a choice based upon *appearance*.



The treatment of appearance in architecture is called taste; if the treatment is good, it is called good taste. True, what is called good taste is often based upon prejudices of trivial nature, and, in the end, there may be no final arbiter between conflicting canons of taste except prejudice. Yet taste is a vital element of architecture, and good architecture requires an understanding of its importance and its nature. An indifference to taste is a form of taste, and it will, whether known to architects or not, produce a readily visible effect.

The denial of taste by the modernist is one which is inconsistent with his theory of painting and sculpture. In these arts they are among the first to insist upon the canons of appearance and to assert

that painting and sculpture do consist of relationships of pure form (or that, at least, they can consist of this). Many of the most famous modernists are known for their abstraction of form *e.g.*, Mondrian (lines), Cezanne (planes), Picasso (cubes and space), Moholy-Nagy (motion) and so on. To suppose that architecture, whose elements are forms, solids, planes, lines, color, etc., cannot participate in art according to the doctrine of pure form, is to contradict the theory of modern painting and sculpture. The truth is that architecture is the arrangement of pure form as well as right (efficient and economical) building. If architecture is an art, then there is preference as to the manner in which the forms of architecture are arranged.

There are many standards by which the forms of architecture are to be arranged—that is, there are many canons of good taste. Some are ethical in origin, some emotional, some traditional and some esthetic. These various canons contradict each other. On only one class of them have most critics been able to agree—and that the esthetic canons, those concerned with the arrangement of pure form for the pleasure of the eye. It is too difficult and lengthy a question to

determine which of the classes of canons take precedence over the others. They have, however, a close relation with historical styles, and with style, which is important to observe.

Style, or rather styles, are the result of habit, of continued preference for the same thing. They are also the incubators of good taste. The use over and over again of certain forms of design (such as columns) causes people to develop their perception as to ideal form and of the relationships between forms. A style after a time creates works which have more and more pleasing relationships between their forms. Thus we have formed the biological theory of architectural criticism. This theory does not pretend to declare a work of art excellent because it is mature in style; it does, however, observe that the mature works of a style are usually better in taste—or in perception of form. And likewise, it is justified in calling the later works of a style as decadent or senile, this being an observation that the perception of form which brought the style to perfection has been replaced by a rote repetition of forms without perception.

The modernist, however, while correctly denying the use of obso-

lete styles, has refused to work within, or attempt to achieve, a style. His theory states that every new work of architecture ought to call forth a new and original expression. Yet, in spite of this denial, their works can be dated by style characteristics, and they copy style features from one another. The modernist is not sufficiently aware that some great works of art are created by styles; and even that some are impossible without it. In this he is like the progressive educator who supposes that the undisciplined expression of a child *must* be superior to that of disciplined expression.

The use of style characteristics is no guarantee of good taste. Works within the same style may be in good taste or bad taste. In the recent Beaux-Arts style we have everywhere the pretentious and over-ornate bank façades which turn the corner and become poor brickwork covered over with a long-unpainted sign; this is poor taste and ugly. Yet in the Beaux-Arts style we also have the excellent and pleasing works of Paul Cret, who was rightly noted for his good taste. The same contrast is found in every style.

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ENTRANCE TO HOUSE OF MRS. JOSHUA S. COSDEN, NEW YORK

VICTOR PROETZ, ARCHITECT

By courtesy of City Art Museum, St. Louis.

*Journal
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Do you know this building?

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Copyright by F. S. Lincoln
"Gloucester", Natchez, Miss.
Built 1803 for Wintrop Sargent

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use of taste is determined by what we wish to express in our building. This is a matter of philosophy and religion. Most critics will agree on how well an idea is expressed in architecture; they seldom will agree on what is to be expressed. What architecture should express, and

how it should express this, are questions far too profound to answer here. No matter what we build, or when, architecture will always have the three basic elements: Utility, Construction and Appearance. Taste and style are what govern Appearance.

Proposed Additions to the White House Offices

THE controversy regarding the propriety of further enlarging the Executive Office Wing of the White House has been ended—temporarily at least—by the Congress. Funds which had been appropriated for the proposed addition, and for other miscellaneous needs in the White House and its grounds, were withdrawn in so far as these provided for the proposed addition.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of The Board of Directors, A.I.A. on February 16, after hearing expert testimony from various sources, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED, That the President of The American Institute of Architects be requested to transmit to President Harry S. Truman the following statement by The Executive Committee of The Institute:

It is unfortunate that the controversy concerning the White House additions should have been terminated, for the moment at least, in a manner which makes no provision for the space required by the President. For it can scarcely have been the intention of those who opposed these additions to prevent the President from having suitable and convenient office space.

The American Institute of Architects suggests that this requirement be met immediately by the construction of a temporary structure raised over West Executive Avenue and adjacent to the State Department building. This structure could be erected economically and expeditiously and would meet the President's need as quickly as the original scheme, in spite of all the delays which have occurred. The building would be an unsightly

makeshift but this would be an advantage, because for that very reason it would not be allowed to remain indefinitely.

Immediate needs having been met in this fashion, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission should be required to prepare, in consultation with the Public Buildings Administration, an overall plan of the area immediately adjacent to the White House for the purpose of solving, in a permanent fashion, the requirements for executive offices. This long-range plan could be studied with due deliberation, and its execution would permit removing the existing executive offices on the White House grounds as well as the temporary structure above suggested. This would permit the restoration of the White House in accordance with its status in 1902 as the residence of the President.

We believe that our recommendation is in accord with the ideas expressed in the statement issued by the Commission of Fine Arts on January 29, in which it said that it "reaffirms the position taken by the Commission of 1902, and subsequently adhered to, that the entire West Wing housing the President's Offices be considered of a temporary nature until such time

as more suitable offices shall be provided elsewhere."

The manner in which the public has responded in the effort to prevent continuing additions to the White House is an indication of the importance of preserving traditions for our most cherished national buildings. Theodore Roosevelt, when confronted with similar proposals during his term of office, was kind enough to recognize the efforts then made by The American Institute of Architects to preserve the White House and, in a letter to The Institute's president, of that time, said:

"Now that I am about to leave office there is something I should like to say through you to The American Institute of Architects. During my incumbency of the Presidency the White House, under Mr. McKim's direction, was restored to the beauty, dignity and simplicity of its original plan. It is now, without and within, literally the ideal house for the head of a great democratic republic. It should be a matter of pride and honorable obligation to the whole Nation to prevent its being in any way marred. If I had it in my power as I leave office, I would like to leave as a legacy to you and

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The American Institute of Architects the duty of preserving a perpetual 'eye of Guardianship' over the White House to see that it is kept unchanged and unmarred from this time on."

The American Institute of Architects hopes that the solution it has offered complies with the spirit of Theodore Roosevelt's desire in a manner that will be acceptable to all concerned.

Planning for a University Campus

By Henry L. Kamphoefner

PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE AND COORDINATOR ON
CAMPUS PLANNING, THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA.

THE FOLLOWING is a statement of the principles upon which I believe future planning of university buildings should be based:

As the University is an instrument for the advancement of the well being of this state, the physical plant housing this instrument should express the objective higher interests of the people, the land and its resources. There exists the question as to how a pseudo-Gothic and Colonialistic apparel over the University working organization can continue to play the role of ostentatious display appearances for collegiate enchantment.

In times of a contracting state budget, the apparent munificence of the buildings is remembered by the supporting electorate. The extroverted Gothic formula becomes a boomerang for slicing appropriations and cutting to the bone University faculty research and vital equipment.

Our first problem then is most often one of enclosing the greatest amount of usable space with the greatest economy. This space to be most usable should be freed from all unnecessary subdivisions dictated by dogmatic preconceptions of room arrangement. A direct

* Since 1937 Professor Kamphoefner has been on the architectural faculty of the University of Oklahoma. Born, 1907, in Des Moines, he studied architecture at the University of Illinois, Columbia University and the B.A.I.D.; worked in architectural offices in Sioux City, Chicago, New York, Washington and Birmingham, with a summer of European travel in 1930. He won a scholarship at Columbia, was alternate for a Schermerhorn Fellowship, and received an Edward Langley Scholarship in 1940.

and hospitable relationship to the people of the state can not be made in terms of simulated imitations of masterpieces of other eras. The direct planning of lines of advance for higher learning and vital research for the well-being of Oklahoma can be expressed through a basic understanding of the true role of architecture, as building fitted to and in sympathy with the Oklahoma contemporary scene.

If we solve the vital problems, satisfy the true requirements of our buildings, create simple workable structure, orient the structure to the sunlight, to the prevailing winds and to the physical characteristics of the property, and adjust these social and economic influences, we will find little need for serious discussion of the buildings' "style".

We should prefer to justify the building as an expression and embodiment of the life and structure within rather than to attempt to justify it as an "authentic" reproduction or rejuvenation of a past style. The building problem should be presented to the architect and the designer completely free from pre-conceived ideas of the non-architect advisor. Ideas, suggestions and definite needed building requirements must then be carefully

examined by the architect and designer in an effort to separate the ideas based on real requirements from those based on sentiment.

If our campus architecture is to keep pace with a changing society it must be dynamic. The great main façade of the Cathedral at Chartres illustrates a dynamic approach to architecture. When the time came to add the second great tower, architectural expression had developed since the days of the original building. Rather than consider the creative expression of architecture a static thing, the designers built the second tower with a then contemporary expression, using similar materials in a harmonious blending, but with a modern character and expression. Architectural expression then kept pace with the development of its art-form. A similar attitude should be shown in the progressive development of our campus. Concessions should be made for the sake of harmony by using blending materials, matching colors and textures and an adherence to a similar scale between the old and the new work. Such a concession to the old work would be a more sympathetic desire for harmony in the architecture of the

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campus than thus far expressed, and a recognition of the principles already stated.

By and large the architecture of our campus has been static. It has clung to false and little understood tradition and expressions of the past while trying to solve contemporary problems. There is no evidence that an eclectic or ready-made architecture has obtained satisfactory past results. Judging from the widespread campus criticism of the function of our many present buildings, the opposite is true. If our architecture is to satisfy our intrinsic needs and requirements it must proceed from the Oklahoma soil. It must recognize the native condi-

tions and provide for them, and it must acknowledge the nature and the purpose of the materials in which it works. These factors inevitably determine the form of the buildings we build.

If a valid style emerges from such an effort it will come with the proper use of materials expressing a desirable social order. Style can not be borrowed or invented for our campus. Many failures have been made in trying to impose a style. When the building forms become tangible in the new expression and organization of living, study, lecture, office and laboratory areas, the style of the campus will be successively enriched.

Honors

WILLIAM ADAMS DELANO, F.A.I.A., in resigning as architectural member of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission, after nearly 17 years of service, drew the following comment from President Truman:

"To assess the value of your services to your country and its Capital one needs but to look around the City of Washington. On all sides we find noble works whose artistic merits reflect the

fine taste and judgment which you exercise. I desire to assure you of my deep appreciation of the service which you have rendered so unselfishly."

BERNARD J. DEVRIES, of Muskegon, Mich., vice-chairman of that city's planning commission, and a member of other local housing and planning groups, has been acclaimed by his community the "outstanding Greater Muskegon young man of 1945."



Books & Bulletins

NEW CITIES FOR OLD: City Building in Terms of Space, Time and Money. By Louis Justement. 238 pp. 7" x 10". New York and London: 1946: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. \$4.50.

This is a book by Louis Justement, A.I.A., released in January by McGraw-Hill—to the publisher's own credit and for the advancement of constructive thinking. It is more than a good book, as is suggested by the following table of contents:

PART I: A Study of Urban Growth and Decay as a Basis for City Planning Within the Limitations of a System of Private Enterprise: The Point of View; The Economic Background; Spending, Saving and Lending; Planning versus Drifting; The Gordian Knot; A Retirement Plan for Buildings; How Much Will It Cost?; Where's the Money Coming From?; Housing,—Costs; Housing,—The New Deal Decade; Housing,—A Program; A Living Architecture. **PART II: A Case Study in City Planning: The Plan of Washington.** **PART III: A Program for City Building: The Political Background; Administration; Federal and State Aid; The Municipal Realty Corporation; A Technique for City Planning; Building for**

Profit; Financing a Housing Project,—A Comparison of Methods; Pending Legislation*; Will It Work?

If there be added up, during a first reading, all the points where one pauses to quibble over a minor matter and where one records a more serious mental reservation, these will not modify materially the verdict that Louis Justement has presented a document which is bold, lucid, useful, and probably more important than will be recognized at first reading. My own reservations may be worthy of some debate at an opportune time, but to cite them here and now would be superfluous. I do not see how thoughtful readers can fail to accord this book immediate and increasing respect.

The author is not addressing his statement to ideologists. I doubt that he is arguing with those who are terrified by future uncertainties, or with those who are bogged down in confusion. He incidentally may bring encouragement to the former, and may help to give the latter some dependable bearings. This would be all to the good; but, in any event, it is not

* This chapter is made obsolete by a later Congressional Bill of cryptic draftsmanship. F.B.

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from persons who remain so be-deviled as these that one may expect constructive contributions toward advancement. The author says that he does not claim that all his proposals are the only ones or the best ones that men can devise. But his hypothetical program as a whole does seem to be the most complete synthesis of procedures for its avowed purposes that we now have before us. I use the term *synthesis of procedures* advisedly, for this is the essence of effective planning. Whether or not the country can accept and adhere to any integrated sequence of effective action, at any time, when a crisis still seems remote or when that word appears to be merely a scaremonger's bleat, this is possibly for the early future to disclose. Justement speaks of our predilection for partial palliatives, expediencies, and immediate *practicalities*. What many now would believe to be too drastic a change of habit to make, so that we can safeguard our individual initiative and our national well-being, may be a very good thing to remember if the country has the misfortune, within a few years, to face a more catastrophic economic tailspin than that of the early 'thirties. There are many students of current trends who see the need to prevent such a crisis.

Mr. Justement has multi-purpose objectives. Some of these he presents in general argument,

others he develops in some detail as a demonstration of methods of approach which will satisfy more than one of his aims. These correlated purposes including the following: To contribute significantly to rounding out and strengthening the national economy by assured construction and employment at a large scale; to create, through an implemented expansion and improved operations, a maximum contribution by the construction industry to an essential high level of employment and lendable savings; to use flexible financial mechanisms and procedures—of private and public character—to encourage and keep in balance the rates of new construction and the rates of demolition of decrepit and obsolescent properties, while maintaining for housing a vacancy ratio which will be advantageous alike to the lender, the builder, and the consumer; to eliminate not only the results of past mistakes in city building but also many of the incompetencies and financial aberrations which have prevented socially-valid achievement in urban growth and development; to rebuild progressively and completely the country's urban communities, to repeat the rebuilding process thereafter, when it is necessary, according to a then-appropriate plan; and to do all of this within a recognizable economic framework which revives and encourages extensive dependence upon private initiative with profit rewards.

With respect to planning, Mr. Justement's presentation is free of the sort of distortion which is represented by those compartmented and unrealistic concepts of so-called "social planning" or "economic planning" or "physical planning" when any one of these abstruse terms alone is offered as descriptive of urban or regional planning. The author deals with the interweaving of economic and physical factors especially (directed toward social ends) as a professional man who is familiar with what it means financially—economically, if you will—to arrange and rearrange what is done with and what is built upon urban land. In the admirably illustrated middle section of the book, tied in textually with Part I, there are presented highlights of historic transition in the capital city and some aspects of a possible master plan concept for the future. The pattern of the latter, not greatly differing in major principles from projected city plans which are beginning to appear elsewhere, might be said to be presented with the author's greater confidence that his recommended procedures would bring an ambitious overall urban design, such as this, within the realm of practicability. Mention should be made of the interest which is added by punctuating the selected periods and dates of the Washington maps and illustrations with a synchronized record of inventions and industrial progress

directly and indirectly of significance in civic evolution.

There may be a temptation for certain specialized groups—for example, mortgage lenders and builders and realtors—to concentrate upon particular parts of the author's exposition where they will believe themselves to be more at home. It is to be hoped that no such particularized examination of "New Cities for Old" will occur at the cost of failure to seize upon and examine critically the full synthesis which, chiefly, makes the book unique.

FREDERIK BIGGER.



BUILDING REGULATION IN CHICAGO: An Analysis and Recommendations. A pilot study prepared for The Chicago Association of Commerce by the John B. Pierce Foundation under the direction of Howard P. Vermilya. Chicago: 1945: The Chicago Association of Commerce.

A study that should be constructively helpful to communities engaged in the revision of their building codes and building legislation generally. In this study Mr. Vermilya supplemented his own staff by collaboration with the architectural and engineering firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill; also Walter V. Schaefer and Alex Elson of Northwestern University Law School.

MARCH, 1946



Architects Read and Write

Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative.



A PATTERN FOR THE INSTITUTE

BY JOHN W. DAWSON, St. Paul, Minn.

AT THIS TIME, when changes in The Institute organization are to be considered at the next convention, it is proper to restate the functions of the architect and The Institute. The function of the architect is to solve his client's problems to the best of his ability. However much we may be interested in community planning and the creation and preservation of beauty, this fact cannot be escaped. To accept money from a client or other employer, and then act in any way contrary to the best interests of that employer is dishonest. If The Institute is to be a professional society rather than an honorary society for those who have achieved perfection, then its chief function must be to increase the professional ability of its members to solve their client's problems.

Let us examine the past performance of The Institute from this point of view. There are the administrative functions, on the whole well handled, but from the professional point of view entirely overhead and non-productive. There is the Technical Service Department. It has been chiefly pre-occupied with the Producers' Council, which is a council of producers

of building materials. It is concerned with problems of producers. Its output is literature very similar to the content of Sweet's Index. It is deserving of our cooperation, but can scarcely be said to increase our professional ability. There is our Washington representative. He may get us some work to do, but surely no one would say that he increases our ability to do the work. There are the Contract Documents, a most admirable and useful tool, created many years ago. They serve to keep the architect out of several kinds of trouble and in that negative kind of way are professionally useful. There are educational activities designed to educate students and the public, while we are the ones who need to be educated. There is the JOURNAL, an outlet for those of us who enjoy expressing our views in print, sometimes interesting and entertaining, but, as stated when publication was started, not designed to be technically useful. There is the Public Relations Service. If we were as competent as we should be, it would not be necessary to employ publicity agents to tell the people how clever we are. Individually, these activities are not

bad. Taken together, they form a program that is very bad, for they mean that we are spending all our funds and energies on extra-curricular and non-essential activities and are neglecting the one essential job of increasing our professional competence.

Now consider the new program as presented in the January *Bulletin*. A careful reading discloses some new titles, some additional personnel, a general re-shuffling, but essentially the same program has been followed in the past. The one significant change is the one which the Board chose to put into effect without consulting the Convention, the employment of a Director of Education and Research. The exact functions of this new director are not set forth, and the terms "Education" and "Research" are so broad as to have little meaning without more exact definitions. Mr. Orr says in his foreword in the January *Bulletin*, ". . . it is possible that we may be able to negotiate a contract with the Producers' Council which will take care of the salary of that Director." From this statement it is a fair assumption that a major part of this Director's effort will be spent along lines that the Producers' Council considers valuable to them. The primary interests of the Producers' Council do not lie in the direction of professional education of architects. Efforts spent in such directions cannot be expected to do much toward increas-

ing the professional ability of architects. Presumably any effort he may spend on education will be directed toward architectural schools or the public. Surely it is not intended that he is to learn all about everything connected with architecture and then pass the information along to the rest of us. Such an idea is not to be taken seriously. The new program has little to commend it over the old one.

Individually, we do not know enough about architecture. Anyone can prove that to himself by examining the work of his competitors. Collectively, we know more about it than anyone else. It is futile to expect the schools or manufacturers or anyone else to tell us how to practise architecture. For specific information about specific materials we may look to others. For the knowledge of how to assemble those materials to produce buildings and to accomplish all of the analysis, planning and designing involved, we can look only to ourselves and each other. We all recognize the importance of a competent profession made up of competent men. We should realize that the other members of the profession cannot become competent without learning what we know.

The indicated course of action is clear, a complete and free interchange of professional and technical knowledge and information. The method, publication of a technical magazine containing technical

papers prepared by the members. The efficacy of this technique has been well demonstrated by nearly every professional society in the country, except The American Institute of Architects. An examination of medical journals, publications of the American Society of Civil Engineers and many others, shows them to be about nine-tenths technical papers and one-tenth editorial matter dealing with legislation, ethics and such things. Techniques of verification of papers before publication, submission to recognized authorities for comment and other such procedures, can readily be learned from any of the many societies which have worked them out. The possible range of subject matter is broad and could include esthetic design, planning techniques, specific plan requirements for certain types of buildings, use of materials, construction methods and details, working drawing technique, specification technique, contracts, economics of buildings, and other fields. A poll of the chapters could indicate the most desirable fields to start with. Perhaps we are too selfish to proceed with such a program. It can be pointed out that if the medical profession had not long ago adopted a policy of exchanging knowledge and discoveries, the art and science of healing would still be in the hands of witch doctors, and also

that leading men in various fields of medicine, after they have written their papers and have told their colleagues all that they can, still remain leaders in their fields.

A technical publication presenting papers by the members should be established by the A.I.A. and be made the first order of business. If we have not the financial or other means to accomplish it, other activities should be curtailed to make it possible.

Along with this should go committee activities in fields to promote the professional abilities of our members. John Ely Burchard's excellent article, "A Signpost in Virginia," in the January JOURNAL, points one direction in which committee activity would be invaluable. There are many other directions which will disclose themselves if we decide to proceed along such lines.

The need seems clear. How to accomplish it is baffling. A year ago the St. Paul Chapter proposed cooperation with the American Society for Testing Materials. Ten other chapters actively supported the proposal by resolution to the Board. The Board considered the proposal and thought it best not to present it to the Convention. Possibly, if this story strikes a responsive chord, and the chapters unanimously so instruct their delegates, something may come of it.

"Only the rich can afford cheap construction, since only they can be expected to pay for frequent and elaborate rehabilitation."—HENRY-RUSSELL HITCHCOCK.

THE INSTITUTE'S NEW STRUCTURE

BY TURPIN C. BANNISTER, Auburn, Ala.

TODAY'S MAIL brought the new January *Bulletin* containing the report of the Committee on the Structure of the Institute. I have read it with mounting enthusiasm, for it marshalls our scattered forces in a concerted campaign against our past ineptnesses. We now have a rational plan of attack to coordinate our energies toward sound and substantial professional growth. The Committee has done a splendid job.

I went to Atlantic City last April with definite intentions of making a plea for just such a re-orientation. Imagine my surprise and delight to find that program. In talking with numerous members, I sensed an inevitable skepticism that such a far-reaching dream could be brought to practical application. I believe that the Committee on Structure has resolved the problem very neatly by avoiding any auxiliary foundation and by placing the functions of education and research within The Institute's own organism. It preserves to The Institute itself the control, responsibility, and prestige that will accompany the growth of the program.

My chief concern for the program is the necessity for attracting to the office of Director of the Department of Education and Research an architect of vision and

energy, who can organize the new program on a sound and comprehensive basis and who can carry it through the next decade with such drive that it will be acknowledged a permanent necessity.

The work of the Director will resolve itself into several well-defined stages. First will come organization and the formation of policies. He must have intimate knowledge of research and education in all their manifestations and he will need a catholic enthusiasm for their potential contributions to the improvement of the profession. He will need unusual comprehension of their possibilities in order to tactfully coordinate the work of the constituent committees into a balanced and meaningful whole. He will need to seek out those men who can and will cooperate in setting the wheels in motion. He should be able to lead them to see what is needed by the profession in their various fields of activities, and be able to suggest, or get them to suggest, fruitful procedures for the fulfillment of these needs.

The grouping of structural, functional and administrative research with scholastic and scholarship activities is particularly happy. Not only will research enlighten academic instruction, but the schools offer the logical facilities by which research may be insti-

tuted. By using existing sources of institutional funds and by attracting more and more direct contributions from many hitherto untapped sources, the program can be inaugurated without delay. The policies governing the placing of research projects, the control of the results, and their dissemination to the profession must be laid out on comprehensive lines, and will require much study of similar policies now in use by scientific, engineering and academic agencies.

The second stage will include the allotment and supervision of specific projects. Since architectural research is relatively new, no doubt the Director will need to

employ considerable ingenuity in finding, selecting and coaching the first teams of personnel. An ability to inspire and gain perseverance will be imperative.

Finally, the dissemination of the results of research calls for a high talent in publicity and editorial skill. It is this phase which will prove to the profession the great worth of the whole program and win future support for its continuation. With reports flowing in from a going research program we will have a solid and continuing body of publishable and important professional material that can support a professional journal of an excellence heretofore unknown.

SIMPLIFIED SPECIFICATIONS

BY HORACE W. PEASLEE, F.A.I.A., Washington, D. C.

IN THE November issue of the JOURNAL you were good enough to call attention to my Simplified Specification method. Since that time I have had more requests than I can take care of for "copies" of or "articles" about my system. Your exposition is the clearest statement I have seen and seems to me fully adequate, but may I supplement it through the columns of the JOURNAL?

The system was originally published in *Pencil Points*, August, 1939 issue; then in *The Constructor*, November, 1939; next in a Bureau of Standards Report, BMS.87 (This report included

another, decimal, system. It costs 10c (cash) from the Supt. of Documents, U. S. Printing Office—but it's out of print and orders are being held). However, everything that's essential is in the JOURNAL write-up—first the "distinctive features:"

1) A mandatory provision, etc. (p. 228)

2) The body of the specification, etc. (p. 228)

Second, the exact mandatory clause—

"Scope, etc." (p. 229)

Third, a typical, sentence-free example.

It might be added that the mandatory provisions would well be used at the head of each subdivision of the specification, for the information of subcontractors.

Within this framework, it is necessary only to make a clear, concise outline of materials and methods, rounding it out with phrases and clauses but avoiding verbs! Automatically, the volume of the specification shrinks.

This method splits specification writing into its two separate and distinct parts—technical and contractual. It shifts the emphasis to the work to be done, and how (which is the field of the technical man), pulling together in a single blanket clause the 1001 repetitions of "The contractor shall furnish and provide with all necessary labor, materials, equipment and incidentals touching on and appertaining thereunto,"

"BATTLESHIP ADMIRAL" MORRIS

BY H. E. JESSEN, Lt. Comdr., USNR,
of Austin, Tex., now in San Francisco

IT is doubtful that the logomachy between Edwin Bateman Morris and Herbert Lippmann has much import to any but the combatants themselves. However, for my money, Lippmann wins hands down.

The importance Mr. Morris puts on the limited awareness of the man in the street is unsound, if not insane. The Empire State Building is primarily a landmark; the Golden Gate Bridge, a time-saver. This is an aphorism with which an architect should not hope

to cope. Why not accept the facts that the thoughts of the public are instilled by very few men, and the average American doesn't even bother to wonder why he likes what he does? And why not criticize "the culture of your audience," and refuse to play on a public field? There is no gap between the goal posts.

Architecture is azoic, and Mr. Morris wants to bury it with mass ego in the comic strips.

"Admiral" Morris can advocate his battleships. I'll take the Atomic Bomb.

The Pittsburgh Chapter Adopts a City

THE Pittsburgh Chapter, Pennsylvania Society, A.I.A., having learned, through one of its

members, of the great needs of Holland architects, has adopted the City of Rotterdam. The purpose of

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the foster mother is to supply the architects of that city with what they need most. Somewhat to the surprise of Pittsburgh, the only need expressed is for architectural magazines published here in the U. S. during the War years. Chapter members are being asked to bring

magazines to headquarters, from which they will be shipped to Rotterdam in small lots. President Lamont H. Button passes the idea along with the thought that it might suggest to others the helping of architects in other Continental cities.



Opportunities for Service on The Institute Staff

THE phenomenal growth of The Institute has placed upon The Board the duty of making some new appointments to the staff of The Institute in Washington. Positions to be filled are as follows:

Director of the Department of Education and Research. His duties and responsibilities are indicated in the report of the Committee on Structure which was published in the January number of the A.I.A. *Bulletin*.

Field Secretary. In the report of the Committee on Structure this position is designated as "Representative to the Chapters," but present thought is to give a broader title with more comprehensive duties.

Assistant to Executive Director. It is anticipated that this position

will become effective after the May Convention, and the duties are indicated by the title.

There is not space in this number of the *JOURNAL* to go into detail with regard to these three activities. In the April issue the positions will be described more fully with respect to duties, conditions of employment and opportunities. At the same time a request will be made for letters of inquiry from architects who may be interested in opportunities to become associated with the national work of the A.I.A., to take important places on its staff, and to undertake responsible permanent positions in Washington. If one or more of these positions should be filled prior to April, a note to that effect will appear.

The Editor's Asides

THE full significance of the Administration's emergency housing program is not to be grasped in these early days of its inception. Development of details, through executive directives and possible Congressional action, may speedily follow and make clear a picture that, as the JOURNAL goes to press, is not sharply in focus.

Roughly, the idea seems to be that housing is our greatest need; that all of the construction industry's efforts will be required to meet that need; and that we shall drop all other kinds of building until we have enough houses.

A look backward at '42 and '43 shows another national emergency when our great need was for ships, planes, tanks and guns. We swept aside every other need and made these things. Possibly the War would have gone disastrously if we had not done just that.

It is possible that some such emphasis on a goal is the most efficient means of persuading the people of the Nation to quit bickering and get to work.

Certainly, the system would keep us at all times in dire need of many things; next year the outstanding need may be hospitals; by 1948,

sewage disposal plants, or railroads, or airports.

It is an interesting theory—fill one need at a time and channel all national effort to that end. Sounds a bit like a Russian five-year plan.

To turn from the general view to the specific, what does the immediate drive mean to the architectural profession? If we are setting out to build little or nothing for the next year or two but small houses, how much of the profession is equipped for that job? Is there any branch of building in which we are *less* fitted at the moment to do a job which belongs nevertheless unquestionably to our profession?

The architect's neglected step-child—the small house—seems to have been deposited squarely upon his doorstep.

One ray of sunshine is visible: though our offices generally are not organized to design the individual small house for the individual client, we have greater competence than for many generations in designing and carrying through the large-scale, integrated, residential community—and the nation's housing needs cannot conceivably be met in any other way.

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